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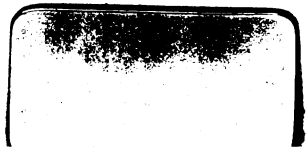

Martha E Kimball

East Kingston 1853

Levi S. Bartlett

Engraved by O Pelton

JAMES A. COBB.

From a Daguerreotype taken in his 6th year

MEMOIR

OF

JAMES ARTHUR COBB.

BY HIS MOTHER,

MRS. EUNICE HALE COBB.

WITH

AN ESSAY ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION,

BY THE PUBLISHER.

SECOND EDITION.

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PREFACE.

By the earnest solicitation of many of our friends, and in the belief that profitable instruction and a kindly influence will be imparted by this means to other minds, both of parents and children, I have been induced to engage in the pleasant task of presenting to the world, and especially to the young, a brief history of our "darling boy Jimmy."

The thought of the lovely child, as he was so recently with us, and so pleasantly filled the important place he held in the family circle, and the reflection that that place can never be filled by him again, has often overwhelmed my mind with sadness, and led me to fear that I should fail to do

justice to the work before me. But I have been strengthened with the assurance that the spirit of the dear departed one attends me, and would even assist me in writing an account of his mission on earth. With this sentiment, I would sit me down to *write* of his life with the same blest feelings with which I have sat to instruct that tender and inquiring mind, which is now receiving divine instruction in his holy, happy home above.

Having always shared his unbounded confidence, and been constantly blest with his valuable society, and having kept a daily record, I have been enabled to give his history in a plain, truthful manner; and although a mother's partialities may sometimes be betrayed, yet it is hoped that the nature of the circumstances will be a sufficient apology.

In preparing this little sketch, in so far as it relates to the conversation of the angel boy, I have endeavored to give his own simple though impress-

ive language. And in doing this I have been cheered with the reflection, that I have acted in accordance with what would have been his own desire, had he been permitted to express it. His daily petition was "that he might live to do good;" and such was his brief but happy and useful life, and his calm and triumphant death, that it is thought no one, young or old, can become acquainted with his prominent traits of character, without being instructed and strengthened for good.

I write not for the critic, but for the lovers of truth and virtue, uttered in the simple language of the heart's affection; believing that, if the biography of a wise and good man may be profitable to other men, the biography of a wise and good child may be profitable to other children.

With a deep reverence for the character and mission of one whom I have loved with a mother's most ardent affection, and a desire at the same

time to be the humble instrument of advancing that all-sustaining and heaven-born cause, the supreme value of which was illustrated by his life, have I prepared this little volume.

And hoping it may lead the young to "remember their Creator in the days of their youth," and the middle-aged and the aged to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," it is very affectionately dedicated to the memory of JAMES ARTHUR,

By his Mother,

E. H. C.

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CHAPTER I.

MEMOIR.

THE subject of the present memoir, James Arthur Cobb, was the son of Rev. Sylvanus and Eunice Hale Cobb, and the youngest of nine children. He was born in East Boston, Dec. 22, 1842. The next youngest child in the family being eight years his senior in age, little James was a pet, as well as a great favorite. And such was his amiableness of disposition, so great his sense of propriety, and so mild and gentle was he at all times, that he was never known to take advantage of the position he held in the family, or the indulgences which were unavoidably bestowed upon him. From his infancy, so easy was he to be governed, or, rather, so great was his love of duty, that correction was seldom needed; and, in the family, often was he

referred to as the little boy who was never whipped. And as long as he lived, nothing would grieve him more than to see a mother strike a child. Often, when his playmates have erred, and knew that the consequence must be a "whipping from their mother," he has gone, and, by reasons strong, persuaded the mother to use some other means of correction, and thus saved his friend from the "rod."

James not only early discovered a sweetness of temper which greatly endeared him to all, but he evinced, also, deep religious feeling. His very nature seemed, as it were, a holy one. His social and moral sentiments were strongly marked, and very early did they become developed, insomuch that, by one member of the family, he received the name of "glory bud." A friend, writing to his mother after his death, says: "I remember well the first time I looked upon your boy. I came to *congratulate* you upon his *birth*. He was three weeks old, and, with a mother's pride,

you pointed to his head, and asked me if it was not fine and promising. I assented, and together we marked out for him a brilliant career. I come again, to-day, to *congratulate* you in his *death*, that your highest expectations have been far more than realized in his life and departure."

The mind of little James was like a beautiful garden of choice flowers, whose opening buds and expanding petals, which are refreshed by the hand of culture, repay with their richest odor the gardener's care. His opening, grasping mind, seemed early to claim kindred with heaven itself; and high and exalted, as well as pure and peaceable, were the teachings it naturally craved. With him, God was love, heaven was beautiful, and earth itself, when rightly enjoyed, a meet temple in which for the indwelling spirit to worship, and admire its great and supreme Architect. And thus early was he taught, and early did he enjoy, the faith which embraces God as the Father and Friend of all, Christ as the Mediator and

Saviour of all, and heaven as the final inheritance of a ransomed, sanctified, and sinless universe. And this faith "grew with his growth, and strengthened with his strength." Often would he express to his "dear mother," when conversing upon the subject of religion, his deep gratitude to God, that *he* had not been taught in his childhood, as she had been in hers, "to believe so about God." His sympathetic mind would seem to be filled with surprise and horror, when told of the song of endless wrath which rocked the cradle of her infancy, and the thoughts of final separation and infinite torments which added a bitter to every sweet of her childhood hours; and thankful would he express himself, that she had since learned those blessed truths which enabled her to teach him in a way that made him so happy, and led him to "love to be good." And often, when he attended school, would he come home with his bosom actually swelling with anguish, because the children had, as he thought, so profaned the

character of God. They had talked to him about a "devil and hell in another world," and "how God would burn little children forever there, if they did wrong *here*." He could well understand how sinners could be "in hell," in their dark and sinful state, in guilt of conscience and restless fear; and how they could be under the influence of an "evil spirit," if they disobeyed the laws of Heaven. But the idea that God would punish his children, upon a principle on which no earthly parent would punish his, namely, for their final injury, was not only to him a mystery, but an offence which he could not away with. He would wonder, when the children would refer to their parents' teachings for a proof of what they said, "how people *could* so teach their children," and would often say, "it is *wicked* to believe so about God." And when he would hear these same children using profanity, he would remark that "he did not wonder at it, and if they were taught to *love* God as he did, they would not want to

swear about him." And if he has not been heard to argue with the "learned doctors" in the "temple" upon this subject, there are many old enough for doctors who have felt the force of his reasoning upon it, while, in his gentle, childlike manner, he would appeal to their own hearts for an answer in favor of the only true teaching adapted to the wants of the human mind.

He found this doctrine of God's paternity, and parental rewards and punishments, the only doctrine he could reduce to practice, when in health, among his playfellows; and it was this, and the thought that he had lived it, and taught it to others as he had had opportunity, which cheered and sustained him through a painful and protracted sickness. He was happy in a clear and philosophical understanding of the consistency of all punishment, under the government of God, with his fatherly love. When he had revived from the first exhaustion, in which he was thought to be dying, when we had not intruded upon him the probability

that he might soon be taken from us, lest it should unpleasantly affect him, he introduced the subject *himself!* He inquired of his mother if she thought he should die, and she answered him frankly in respect to his situation. Unmoved, he very calmly replied, "I am not afraid to die; I do not believe what some say about God, and what he will do to his children in another world, which makes them afraid to die. Of course, God will punish us when we do wrong, because he loves us. He will punish us to make us better. I shall find him as good in another world as he is here." This faith even opened to him the bright glories of the upper world,

> "Where sits the Saviour dressed in love,
> And there the smiling God."

EARLY READING.

JAMES early showed a love for books; and early, too, did he discover a taste for that kind of reading which, while it would serve

for amusement, would also interest and instruct him. It was always his delight to read and hear read those books which illustrated the true value of virtue, and the importance of doing good. He was favored with a good memory, and was thereby enabled to treasure up much which he gained in this way; and, having great "reflection," he was led to make useful application of the knowledge thus gained. And during his last sickness, reading engrossed much of his time and attention. He had collected quite a large library of well-selected books, which were to him pleasant and agreeable companions.

He was very fond of the Bible, and took great satisfaction both in reading and hearing it read. The same friend, from whose note I have already quoted, further says: "The last time I saw you with your little James was in your sitting-room, about a year ago. You then told me of the precarious state of his health, and said you felt, each day, as you read to him from the evan-

gelists the life of the Saviour, that you might be instructing a child for heaven. These words have proved prophetic, and you must be greatly comforted in the reflection that you have been permitted to see so much of a Christ-like spirit manifested in your child for the last year of his life."

The following is an extract from a letter sent to my daughter while on a visit to Maine, in August last:

"*Sunday evening, Aug. 3d.* I have just been engaged in reading to James Arthur the last two chapters of Matthew. This morning he wanted me to read to him of Jesus' birth, and to-night he wanted to hear the chapters containing an account of his *trial* and *crucifixion.* I have read these chapters to him, until he can repeat the most of them. What a little Christian! How differently we should feel to part with him now, from what we should to have had him suddenly removed when he was first taken sick! He seems constantly preparing himself for a higher sphere, even for the

sweet society of angels. His sickness is made to me, by these accompanying circumstances, one of the greatest blessings I ever enjoyed; and never before was I taught to appreciate faith and contentment, as I see it daily manifested in this little disciple of Jesus."

And thus did his love for reading, and particularly his love for the Holy Scriptures, continue until his strength failed, which was only three days previous to his death. The last chapter which was read to him was the one in Matthew which gives an account of the "transfiguration." After it was finished, he smilingly said, "Mother, *that is the way those angels looked.** You know I told you they were dressed in *white*, and where they were it was all *light.*" He seemed delighted that he had found something by which he could describe them, because he had always said, when speaking of them, that he "could not tell how they looked, for there was nothing on earth so

* See the "Vision," chap. VI.

beautiful." And he was pleased that in the word of God he had *read* of something like them.

The week previous to his death, he had his books all arranged in his library, according to his direction, and wished they might always be retained with the same care that he had kept them.

Yes, precious child, these books we love,
Mementos of thy mind;
Thy spirit meek, thy faithful heart,
Affectionate and kind.

SCHOOL-DAYS.

At the age of four, James entered school, a period to which he had looked forward with pleasant anticipations. Being favored with one of the best of teachers, his school-days commenced most pleasantly, and were ever spent with much satisfaction and delight. Learning was to him no task, and in whatever "department" he might be, he always aspired for the head. With the teacher, as far as consistent with the rules.

of right, he was always a favorite, and nothing pleased him more than to be appointed an assistant over the smaller scholars. And, with the pupils, "Jimmy" was one who was always beloved, and his word was "law." Such was his mildness, and so universally kind was he to all his schoolmates, that he never failed to gain the good will of all. With him there was no partiality, excepting it might be for some poor, unfortunate boy, whom others would neglect and abuse. Then he was always found on the side of the "injured party."

This characteristic, which ever beautifully manifested itself in all his intercourse with his playmates, seemed to be duly appreciated by them, and rendered him one to be sought after and loved. And it was very gratifying, on the day of his burial, when his playmates were admitted to take their last look of one with whom they had enjoyed so many pleasant hours, to witness the deep and heartfelt sympathy which seemed voluntarily to flow from all, as they

would utter forth their little encomiums: "Jimmy was a *good* boy;" "We *loved* Jimmy;" "We are sorry he can't play with us any more,— we always loved to have him with us, because he was so kind;" "*Everybody loved Jimmy,*" &c. &c. And such was the interest he felt for his school-mates, and so desirous was he that they should "be good," that when he had become so sick that he could neither go out nor endure the fatigue of seeing all the children in his room, he sent for Miss Lincoln, who had been his teacher most of the time from the commencement of his school-days, that he might send his message to the school by her. She very kindly consented to visit him for that purpose, and at that time he was so feeble that he was not allowed to see any but those who were in attendance upon him, it being but a few days after the time of his "vision." But his whole desire seemed to be to "do all the good" he could while he might be here, regardless of any effort on his part which it might

require. And he was very desirous that Miss L. should take the words from his lips, that she might bear them directly to the scholars from him. He was aware of his situation, and thought he should never see his school-mates again; and perhaps a few words from him, at such a time, might produce upon their minds an impression which would not be forgotten. His teacher came; and, as she seated herself upon the couch of this suffering, patient child, with whom she had enjoyed so long and pleasant a relation, and beheld his calm, ethereal countenance, she could not repress the bright tear-drop that started unbidden forth. But, perfectly composed, and unmoved by tears, he was prepared to give to her what he regarded as his last message to his school-mates. After speaking to her of his sickness, and the happiness and peace he felt, and of his joy in seeing her, he told her he wanted "to send to the scholars by her." With the assurance that his wish should be granted, he said, "I want you to tell the children to

be *good*, and never *swear*, or use naughty words. I want them to treat you kindly, because, when they are out of your sight, they do not do as you would wish them to do. Tell them to be kind, and live to do good." This was his message; and as he expected when he gave it, it was his *last message*. He closed his conversation by asking her to tell them all that he "wanted them to do as he wished of them, so that if *they* should be sick, as *he* was, and thought they were going to die, they could feel as happy as he did." His teacher retired with the reflection that she had felt herself to be benefited by this instructive and interesting interview.

After this, the health of little James continued to improve, and not knowing the stage of the disease, hopes were entertained that he might so far recover as to be able to go out. And when he thought himself that he might be able at some future time to attend school, his great concern seemed to be to know how he could go to school

and not have to mingle with the boys, so as to hear their profane and vulgar language, which had always annoyed him. He exacted the promise that if he *should* go to school again, the teacher should first be visited, to see if he could attend school without being obliged to mix with the boys out of the school-house. He at one time remarked, "I had rather be confined at home till I am too old to play with boys, than to have to go into the street again and hear their naughty talk."

He had attended the grammar-school but a short time before his last sickness, having been prevented from entering before, on account of the feebleness of his health. When he entered, it was with the determination that he would never have a "mark" for any misdemeanor whatever while he should remain a member of the school. And had his health been adequate to the undertaking, no doubt he would have carried his intention into execution. His highest ambition always had been to stand

well in his school. After his death, in looking over his papers, a note on interest, of fourteen dollars and fifty cents, was found in his wallet, which had been given him by his father for the "Goods" and "Excellents" he had brought from school as "rewards of merit." But this "good little boy" was not to join his school again on earth. A higher school was appointed for him, where sickness and disappointment can never come.

"Delightful scene! a world at rest;
A God all love; no grief, no fear;
A heavenly hope, a peaceful breast,
A smile unsullied by a tear."

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY.

HONESTY and strict integrity were always cherished and faithfully reduced to practice by this lover of the right and the true. From his infancy he despised everything like deception and falsehood, and would avoid, as much as possible, those whom he knew to be regardless of the truth. He

had frequently remarked that he could not enjoy his *marbles* with the boys, because they so often sought to deceive him. This he disliked; and he thought it so wicked, that he had made arrangements, should he ever be able to play with his marbles again, to play in the house, either "with the family" or "alone," because he could not enjoy it to play with those who would deceive him. His was a privilege, in respect to this subject, of which he often spoke with gratitude, and the value of which he ever seemed fully to appreciate. He despised, from the bottom of his heart, anything like falsehood or deception; and whether he met with it in "high places," or with his equals, he would never fail to offer a gentle rebuke. *Lying* and *swearing* were considered by him among the highest offences. His word could always be depended upon, and to question it would sorely grieve him. He has often, through the past year, spoken of the circumstance of his never having told but three lies in

his life, and one of them was when he was so young he had forgotten what it was. Of those he remembered, he said, "At one time, when I had failed to receive a 'good' at school, I told, on getting home, that the *wind* blew it away." The other was, "When I was a very little boy, and did not know what it meant to 'play truant,' I went away with a boy older than myself; and, when I came home and was asked if I had played truant, I said I had not." These two he could remember, but the other he could not. A few days before his death, when conversing upon this subject, he said, "I wish I could go down to my grave without ever having told a *lie*, or *sworn*." He continued, "I can say that I never drank rum, and I wish I could say I never did either of the others." On being told that it was not known by the family that he had ever sworn, he said, "Once, when I was a little boy, and did not know better, I said a naughty word; but when I knew it was wicked, I never

would say it again." But he seemed very much to regret that he had ever done that, "because he should like to go down to his grave and say he had never done anything so wrong." He was assured that his heavenly Father would not consider him an offender against his holy law; for those things were done when he was too small to know the evil, and his true repentance of them was such as God would own and bless. Yet he wished he "had never done the wrong, even when he was so young."

But few, perhaps, go down to their graves with so few faults to regret as did this child of right, and lover of the good and true.

RESPECT FOR AGE.

JAMES was a child who could always render himself agreeable. His respect for the aged and those who were his superiors was such, that he never failed to receive the notice he deserved, and never wanted

for friends. He was always ready to converse with, or hear conversation from, those older than himself; and would enter into the subject with all the interest of a person of many years. In travelling, his respectful treatment to all would secure him friends, and, under all circumstances, he never failed to receive his full share of attention.

If an "old man" were passing by, whom other boys would run after and annoy, James would always be seen "standing aloof," until he could quietly get to him, and render him all the assistance which lay in his power. He would never himself speak, nor would he allow those with him to speak, disrespectfully of others. This principle he carried out in his every-day walk in life. A few days before his death, a gentleman called into his chamber to see him, and in the course of conversation, when speaking of his father, he spoke of him as "the old gentleman." James very calmly looked

up, and said to him, "We have no such person here as *the old gentleman.*" "I mean your father," said he, thinking James did not understand him. "I know whom you mean," said James, "but we do not call my father the *old gentleman.*" This incident is mentioned to illustrate his regard for etiquette, and his appreciation of due respect to the several relations of life. And this principle he extended to all, high and low, rich and poor.

LEAVING SCHOOL.

JAMES entered the grammar school in East Boston, March 3, 1851, and he was highly pleased that he had now commenced a new era in his school-day life. But in a few weeks it became obvious to his friends that his health was failing, and consequently he would be obliged to leave his school. His health had for some time been considered delicate, but no particular alarm was felt until about this time. The sum-

mer that he was five years old, he was kicked by a horse while playing with some of his little friends upon the green, near his father's house. He was taken up and carried home seemingly lifeless, and was thought for some time to be dead. But after the use of restoratives he revived, and soon became able to speak. He thought he was not much hurt; and as there was no outward bruise, it was thought by his physician that, if he had not received an inward injury, he would soon recover. But the blow which he received was very severe, and upon the region of the heart. This was probably the original cause of the disease which terminated his life, — "enlargement of the heart." It was some time before he seemed much affected; but from the time of this accident can be traced a diminished inclination to engage in active plays, and a desire to remain in the house, and enjoy quiet. Often, when urged to go out, he would decline, saying, he "did

not feel *sick*, nor did he feel like going out to play."

In the winter of 1851, he was attacked with the whooping-cough, which very seriously affected him. This was the latter part of the winter; and in May following, on returning from a short journey to Hamilton and Ipswich, where he had accompanied his mother, to spend a few days with her friends, he was taken quite sick, and the heart seemed very seriously affected. The breast-bone had now become considerably protruded by the enlargement of the heart;—the beating of the heart, which had been some time very irregular, had now become much more violent; and the disease, which had evidently been more rapidly developed by his cough, seemed daily to assume a more fearful aspect. The following is an extract of a letter sent about this time to Mrs. H. F. M. Brown, of Cleveland, Ohio, May 24, 1851.

"With regard to the health of our family,

we are all well, excepting our darling James Arthur. He has been quite sick, for some time, with a diseased heart. Within a few weeks it has assumed quite an alarming character, and we fear it will, sooner or later, deprive us of the sweet society of one who has ever been a bright star in our happy domestic constellation. He has ever seemed a plant more fitted for heaven than earth; and if my heavenly Father has appointed to transplant him, in all his angelic purity, to a clime more congenial, and a state more adapted to his heavenly mind, may we view it right, and submit with child-like resignation! True, a vacancy would be made which nothing else could fill; but the remembrance of such a child would be sweet indeed, and his name would be deeply engraved on the tablet of each of our hearts.

"O, could I not trust in God to 'raise the dead,' this poor heart would burst! But the sweet light of Jesus shines into my weep-

ing soul, bidding every anguish to cease, and every tear be dry.

'The Lord is my helper, I will not fear.' "

Our dear boy gradually recovered from this epidemic, and by reason of a close application to good medical advice, and the unremitting care of the family, who were ever anxious to render him all needed assistance, he seemed not to suffer much through the summer, although he was deprived of the privilege of attending school, and was unable to engage much in his plays out of doors. But, being well enough to take short occasional journeys, and enjoy his books, and the abundant articles for his amusement which were constantly provided for him, he passed his time very pleasantly, and was always contented and happy. In September and October, he appeared much recovered, insomuch that his friends felt greatly encouraged to hope that his life would be prolonged, and that they should yet, for some time to come,

enjoy the sweet society of him who ever blessed the family circle. On the 7th of October, he went, with his mother, again to Hamilton, to visit his uncle, whose residence was upon a large farm, to spend a few days among the ripened fruits. There he always enjoyed himself very much, as it was his delight to ramble in the open fields, and watch the playful lambs and grazing flocks. James was left at Hamilton to spend a few days, while his mother was obliged to return home. The following is an extract from her diary:

"*Oct.* 19*th.*—I felt so very anxious *about*, and so very lonely *without*, our dear boy, that I could keep from him no longer. So I took the cars, after dinner, and hied me away to Hamilton. When I had come in sight of the house, I saw the loved one playing with his favorite 'pointer' upon the green grass. No sooner did his eye fall upon me than he flew, with his dog after him, to meet his 'blessed mother.' A happy meeting it was for us both; and, although

he had calculated to spend the rest of the week, yet he was willing to return with me this evening. O, precious child! what *should* we do without him?"

While in H. he wrote a very interesting letter to the family at home, and walked nearly a mile, alone, to enjoy the pleasure of putting it into the office himself. He felt a great pride in being heard from, while absent, in this way. He enjoyed his visit much, and seemed as well after his return as he had been for some time previous. He had now so far regained his strength, that he desired to attend school some of the time, and engage in his lessons, to which he had never failed, while at home, to give considerable of his time and attention. And through the kindness of Miss Lincoln, whose school he had always attended, and who kept very near his home, he went into her school, some part of the time, for several weeks. This was to him a happy privilege, and he greatly enjoyed it. But, as the weather grew colder, he began to be

troubled with a cough, and gradually to fail in his general health. On the 6th of November, having a little cousin visiting him from Maine, and being desirous to afford her all the pleasure that lay in his power, he obtained the privilege of riding over to the city to wait upon her to an "ice cream," and give her the pleasant excursion of riding over to the city. This was the last time he ever left his home. He soon became quite feeble, and unable to go out at all. The 13th of November was the last time he ever went to the door to breathe the free air of heaven; being unable, after that, to be at all exposed. The 22d of November, he became quite sick, and took his chamber, to which he was confined, for most of the time, until his death. He became more comfortable,—so much so as to be with the family on "Thanksgiving Day," and enjoy their company in the evening, although he was then so weak as to be obliged, for most of the time, to recline upon the couch.

From this time until "Christmas," he

seemed really to gain strength, insomuch that he urged, and greatly enjoyed the arrangements for, and the anticipation of, that anniversary occasion. He was very happy in the distribution of his "gifts," and had two handsome books procured for him, to present to Dr. Crane and lady, as he felt that it was through his kind instrumentality that he was enabled to enjoy this pleasant occasion with his friends on earth. Little James looked forward with exquisite delight to the time when the "Tree" should be dressed, on account of a "secret plot," in the execution of which he had alone invited his eldest sister to become engaged with him. He had been laying by money, for some time, to purchase presents for "Christmas," and he was desirous that "mother" should become a recipient of one of his choicest "gifts." It was arranged between the two that a *fine gold bracelet* should be obtained, with a "spring locket," and in it *the likeness of little Jimmy.* On the back of the case was to be inscribed,

"From Haley and Jimmey, to our dear Mother." This was to the "dear boy" a grand idea; but now the question was, how was the *likeness* to be obtained? One more must be let into the secret. The doctor must be consulted, to know if James could be allowed to ride a short distance from the house, where there would be an opportunity to have the daguerreotype taken privately. The doctor thought that if the weather should be very pleasant, and he should remain comfortable, he could be permitted to go out to buy his "toys for presents," and then he would have his likeness taken. But in this plan he was disappointed; for the weather was unpleasant, and he was not quite as well as he had been. Now, there remained but one alternative, and that was, for his father to be admitted a member of the contemplated plan, and ascertain if a good copy could be obtained from the likeness which was taken when he was between five and six years old. As this was a very perfect likeness, it was at

once concluded upon that one could be taken from it which would be equally as good as to have it taken from the original; and so it proved. Christmas evening came, the tree was dressed, and impatiently did little James wait for his mother to retire, after she had performed her part of the labor, that he might have the "box" containing the *famous bracelet* placed upon some conspicuous branch, so that it should soon attract the intended owner's attention. When the signal was given, "*All is ready,*" James, in his father's arms, headed the company, and marched to the large, well-lighted parlors, where stood the "Tree," heavily loaded with rich and well-selected presents. And, although the inscriptions, "James A.," and "Jimmy," were to be seen upon articles on every part of the tree, yet nothing could divert his attention from *Mother's box.* By his request, before the time of "gathering" had arrived, he was permitted to have the "box" taken off, and handed to *Mother.* As she was admiring

the beautiful workmanship, and expressing her delight at receiving from her "eldest daughter" and "youngest son" such a valuable present, he slyly stepped up, and placed his tiny finger upon a secret spring, when the bracelet opened, presenting our *darling's face*, natural as life.

The thrilling surprise, the interesting sight, the presentiment that this was an image of himself provided by one who was soon to withdraw from these earthly scenes, together with all the other attendant circumstances, drew a precipitous flow of tears from the mother's eyes, with which that of all the family mingled. Even the little designer of the delightful surprise was obliged to dash, with his hand, a transient tear from his eyes; but his soul feasted with rich satisfaction on the consequence which his gift to mother had assumed, and he smilingly told her that father said "it would make mother cry."

And now he was ready to assist in gathering his own various "gifts," consisting of

a great variety of books, games of different kinds, a choice collection of toys, &c. &c. All had been desirous to add their part for "Jimmy." And when he had enjoyed, with the family, all the pleasures of the happy occasion, he retired, with his sensitive heart filled with gratitude to God that he had been favored with so rich an entertainment; and the thought that he had been so successful in "pleasing mother" seemed to fill his soul with the purest pleasure.

After this, he continued very comfortable; so much so, that he was able to enjoy his books, games and toys, for some weeks; and these, with his other means of amusement, added much to his comfort. He possessed a natural taste for writing, drawing, and painting, and had learned to work with worsted, and knit and sew; therefore he could occupy his time most pleasantly, and never seemed lonely, or in the least discontented. Indeed, he was as cheerful as though he were in perfect health; and, through all his sickness, he was never heard

to complain, or utter a murmur. Even after his "vision," an account of which is given in chapter VI., he seemed uniformly happy, and would say, "I feel that I have two homes, one with the angels in heaven, and one with my friends on earth; and were it not that you would be so lonesome without me, I should rather be an angel in heaven than live to suffer." This "vision" afforded him much solid satisfaction. He seemed to *live* upon it; and so clear was his mind at the time of its occurrence, that he took great delight in contemplating upon it. He continued quite comfortable, excepting that he suffered occasional pressure and irritation of the lungs; and the dropsical affection, which had once been overcome, again made its appearance. Simple remedies were resorted to, which afforded him much relief, and all his faculties remained unimpaired. He never seemed to consider himself "very sick," although, at times, he would speak of the probability of his not getting well. He was always per-

fectly calm and reconciled; always expressing, in the most pleasant manner, his high sense of gratitude for the kind attentions he was constantly receiving, both from every member of his own family and his numerous circle of neighbors and friends. If the little sufferer erred in anything, it was in trying to keep his feelings to himself, lest he might cause "work," or "trouble." Everything that was done for him was "right," and all was always "very nice." He was not able to lie down for a week before his death, but reclined in his easy-chair, where he took all his rest. He seemed very grateful that he could be made so comfortable, and would enjoy his rest quite naturally; and in that chair he "fell asleep," when everything, according to his direction, had been so "nicely" fixed.

The first Sunday in February he was able to go into the "study," and join in family devotion; and greatly did he enjoy the interesting occasion. The following, which is the 106th hymn in the "Family Sing-

ing-book," was sung for him, in which he joined:

SICKNESS AND RECOVERY.

1 My God, thy service well demands
The remnant of my days;
Why was this fleeting breath renewed,
But to renew thy praise?

2 Thine arms of everlasting love
Did this weak frame sustain,
When life was hovering o'er the grave,
And nature sunk with pain.

3 I calmly bowed my fainting head
On thy dear, faithful breast,
And waited for my Father's call
To his eternal rest.

4 Back from the borders of the grave,
At thy command, I come;
Nor will I ask a speedier flight
To my celestial home.

5 Where thou appointest mine abode
There would I choose to be;
For in thy presence death is life,
And earth is heaven with thee.

He remained as comfortable as he had been for a few days after this, but it soon became apparent that he was not long to

remain a tenant of earth. His disease now too plainly spoke of his approaching dissolution, and he appeared "willing rather to depart." Sunday, Feb. 22d, he was much more weakened and debilitated than he ever had been before, and for the first time during his sickness passed a day without seeming to notice and enjoy, in a greater or less degree, what was passing around him. But the application of warm baths and other restoratives relieved him, and rendered him more comfortable. Sunday night his rest was more disturbed, and he still remained very weak, but perfectly sensible to everything that was done for him, and in possession of his natural pleasant and endearing traits. Monday morn, when his father, on leaving for his office, exchanged with him, as was his wont, the kiss of affection, and asked him what he should bring him home that day, he mildly, and for the first time, answered, "*nothing*." He seemed done with earth, and no longer asked for its support. And so it was; for he never requested

anything after that, but his simple drinks, and a choice kind of jelly which was sent him on Saturday. Monday afternoon he revived, and spoke of the boys playing under his window as he had been accustomed to speak of them through his sickness, and seemed not at all disturbed by them. About nine o'clock, Monday evening, he suffered much from pain of the lungs and heart, more than he ever had before. It was soon relieved by the application of hot baths, so that for a few hours before his death he seemed free from pain and distress, and expressed himself as feeling "very happy." The applications which had been made during the last three weeks had very much relieved his breathing, so that in this respect he was greatly benefited. About ten minutes before one, he asked for sweetened water, which he took and drank, saying, "*that's good.*" Then he requested to have his pillow "fixed," that he might "rest his head." It was accordingly arranged, when he gently laid his head upon it, say

ing, "that's nice," and fell more quietly asleep than he had done for many hours before. But it was a "sweet sleep," of which he had often spoken,—it was the peaceful sleep of death. And when the family were called to look upon him, he appeared like one in the gentle unbroken slumber, while that sweet, angelic smile of content was still visible upon his mild and tranquil countenance. It did not at all seem as though death had visited us, but that the angels had truly come, and escorted home the one whom they had before desired to come and be with them, and wear the wreath they had prepared for him. And O, death was to him a sweet release, and he had desired it! His sufferings were o'er, and our souls felt to say, "The Lord hath done as it seemeth to him good." Amen!

After his death, a "post-mortem" examination took place, when the true nature of his case was known. The disease was found to be of the heart, and of a very decided character. The attending phy-

sicians thought it the most so of any case of a child that had ever come under their observation. The heart was nearly *six times* larger than it should have been. The "*mitral* valve" of the left auricle of the heart had become so thickened that it was almost entirely closed. The natural functions of this organ had not been performed for a great length of time; consequently the system had gradually become weakened, and prepared to admit, without a struggle, the transit of its heavenly tenant.

This disease must have been produced, originally, by inflammation from some cause, and no cause can seem so probable as that produced by the accident before referred to. James was a remarkably healthy child, having never had a sick day until the development of the complaint of which he died. It is thought that the *whooping*-cough accelerated the development of his disease, which had been gradually coming upon him for two years previous.

It was a great satisfaction to know, on

examination, that nothing could have been done, which was *not* done, to meet the circumstances of the case, or relieve his sufferings. It was the most unremitting care and attention, together with the best of medical advice, that had so long preserved his life, and rendered him, for most of the time, measurably comfortable. And we felt that we had reason for gratitude to God, that he was not permitted to suffer with protracted pain and distress. Though his sufferings seemed at times severe, yet his mind was so elevated, so strong in faith and trained in contentment, that he was enabled to pass his time pleasantly, and even said he thought himself "the happiest little boy on the island." On seeing his mother betray signs of grief on account of his occasional apparent sufferings, he would assure her that she had no cause of sorrow,— that he did not suffer as she supposed,— that God was good and would take care of him, and he was happy. Such is the power of enlightened faith in God, even in the child.

And O, that beautiful exit! O, precious Gospel faith! I will love thee more than ever, because thou didst bless the life, to its last mortal moment, of my darling boy, and didst sweetly bear him on, that he should "never die!" Gently he passed away, convoyed by those beautiful angels, who had already borne to him the glad message of life immortal, and shown to him the cloudless glories of that celestial paradise above,

"Where sickness never comes,
Where grief no more complains,
Health triumphs in immortal bloom,
And purest pleasure reigns."

NOTE. — I have spoken of James Arthur's love of Scripture reading, and his appreciation of its meaning. When I was reading to him, during his last sickness, of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, and of the hosannas uttered by children on the way, he was so much pleased with the Saviour's kind reception of children's praise that he desired a request to be communicated to our pastor, Rev. C. H. Webster, that, on the first Sunday he should be able to attend meeting, he would preach from the words, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." He never became able to attend church again; but Br. Webster, to whom the little boy had even personally preferred the request, made that the foundation of a most profitable discourse, on the first Sabbath the family attended public worship after his decease.

CHAPTER II.

THE COMMUNION.

In the arrangement of this work, I have chosen the method which was most convenient to myself, and was judged to be most likely to interest and edify the reader. In the first chapter I have given a brief memoir of the life of James Arthur, in general; and then I have devoted other chapters to illustrate incidents and striking traits of character, which, though in some cases involving partial repetitions, render the work as a whole more valuable than would the crowding of all into a continuous narrative.

From the first lispings of little James, he ever manifested much pleasure in conversation on the life and mission of Jesus. He would sit hours, and hear instruction in the form of stories on the Saviour's birth, mir-

acles, crucifixion, and resurrection. And he thus became early acquainted with the purpose of the Saviour's advent; and very early, too, he expressed that faith in the saving grace of the Son of God which would well become an older Christian.

After he was old enough to attend meeting on the Sabbath, he early became much interested in all the exercises, and his powers of observation were great. And so often, when very small, had he expressed his desire to partake of the sacrament, that his mother would let him retire, to avoid his discriminating questions, which had penetrated her heart with a feeling of regret that he could not be permitted to enjoy the privilege he had seemed so much to desire.

On the first Sunday in June, 1850, James attended meeting with his mother at father Streeter's. It was communion day. At the close of the pulpit services, father Streeter, as is his custom, invited all who "love our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" to unite with them in this interesting com-

memoration of his death, and of his love for mankind. Little James very attentively listened to all that was said, and then, turning to his mother, with a Christian smile upon his countenance, and a heart swelling with gratitude to God for the opportunity of enjoying such a happy season, he said, "Mother, *I* love our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; can't I partake with you?" The appeal was powerful, and the earnestness and sincerity with which it was made sank deep into the mother's heart. Struck with his reasoning, and knowing his wish to join in this beautiful service, from a pure desire to show forth his love to Christ, his wish was granted. And there, with the aged, middle-aged and young, did this child, but seven years old, sit with his whole soul wearing the appearance of the most devout meditation, and partake of these sacred emblems! And no one present seemed more perfectly satisfied with this expressive ceremony.

Some, who had seen the *child* engage in

this interesting service, spoke with his mother at the close of the meeting, as though they thought it to be a mother's indulgence to the whim of a thoughtless child. But, on being made acquainted with his deep religious character, and the argument by which he urged his appeal, they were melted to tears; and then, instead of rebuke, they gave him the right hand of Christian fellowship, which he received, and with emotion, assuring them that he loved the Saviour. On his way from church, his happiness was great, that he had now enjoyed what he had so long desired, and he expressed a hope that "as soon as he was old enough he should become a member of the church." And when his health was such that he was not able to attend meeting on the holy Sabbath, and would read and have read to him of the history of Christ, he would seem comforted that he had shown to the world his love for him by partaking of his holy sacrament. And what a solace, when sickness had long

prevented this devout child of God from attending the sanctuary of his Father in heaven, to think that he had been indulged the blessed privilege as above related!

O, sweet the memory, thou precious one,
Now that thy work so well on earth is done,
Of those communings, in thy truthful love,
With Him whom thou hast joined in worlds above.

CHAPTER III.

JOURNEY TO MAINE, AND THE LOST HAT.

Such was the amiableness of little "Jimmy's" disposition, and the interest and sympathy which he ever manifested for others, that he never failed to gain the attention and sympathy of those around him. If he was travelling, and met with persons who seemed to be needy, he was ever anxious in some way to render them assistance; and hence he was always meeting with every attention which the noble and generous know well how to appreciate.

In the summer of 1850 he took a journey, in company with his mother, to the State of Maine, to visit their friends in Hallowell, Augusta, and Waterville. And although then but seven years old, instead of being, as most children would have been at this age, a "care," he was not only the

best of company, but a great assistant in taking charge of the baggage, and in other attentions. In the evening he would seek a place alone with his mother, upon the deck of the steamer, and for hours visit the stars and the planets, marking their regularity, and admiring their loveliness and grandeur. He would look at them as the "eyes of God," and the "language of Omnipotent Power." "Mother," he would say, "do you see them *twinkle* at us, as though they were pleased that we are enjoying them so well? And perhaps God is talking to us through them." These were ideas of his own; and the philosophical and devotional converse greatly added to the enjoyment of his mother, who could never be an hour in the presence of this little reasoner, without feeling that she was made better. His conversation would elevate her mind to Him who established for the sun and moon their eternal stations, and appointed to the stars their unvarying spheres. James had designated the *moon* as the rep-

resentative of his "mother," and her bright attendant planet as that of "Jimmy;" and by these names he would be delighted to address them. And he would often speak of the time when he should go to the spirit world, where he should know more of the beauty of those heavenly bodies than he could ever know here. Indeed, heaven was the place where his hopes seemed always to centre.

Little James and his mother arrived in Hallowell on the morning of July 10th. He took much interest in perambulating the place where his mother had spent the early part of her life, and particularly did he enjoy the Sabbath-school, where she gave an account of her own religious experience. She referred to the time when she stood alone in that place, not enjoying the society of a single female associate who dared to "name the name of Christ" as "the Saviour of all men," and God as the Father and Friend of all. He was led to contrast her opportunities with his own, and

seemed much to realize how great were his sources of enjoyment in this respect.

He visited his friends in Augusta; and there are those there who will long remember his strong sympathies and deep religious feelings.

On Monday morning, July 22d, he started, in company with his mother, for Waterville, by the steamer Balloon. The morning was serene and pleasant, and he was greatly delighted in passing the new-mown fields, and beholding the rich display of corn and grain which so beautifully dressed the rich and fertile banks of the Kennebec. As we advanced, his eyes were constantly upon the stretch to behold new and increasing beauties; and his whole soul was "tremblingly alive" to participate in the sublimity of the scene, and love and adore the illimitable goodness of Him who "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

His visit in Waterville was to him pecu-

liarly interesting. There he visited the spot where his parents first commenced the pleasant task of "house-keeping;" and there he visited the first house his father ever builded for himself and family. He visited there, with his mother, the graves of those whom she had loved, and with whom, in former years, she had held sweet intercourse on earth; and there did he mingle his tears with hers, as they read the names and epitaphs of those whom memory held most dear. To the mind of James there was nothing dark or gloomy in a visit like this; for his happy mind would never look down into the grave, but, upon the wings of faith, it would soar aloft, where Christ and angels dwell.

He also took much interest in calling on those who had heard his father preach thirty years before, and who were living upon the riches to be enjoyed in a practical belief of the truth as it is in Jesus. And Mr. and Mrs. Morrill, with whom he made his home while in Waterville, will never forget his

strong attachment to them, and the hours he would spend with "Grandpa Morrill," as he was pleased to call him, conversing with him upon various subjects, until he would push his little arguments to where the old gentleman would confess himself "almost wound up." But, although his "perceptive" and "reflective" faculties were so large as to give him great advantage in conversation, yet his large *conscientiousness* and *benevolence*, united with remarkable *veneration*, would always give to his whole tone such a perfect air of sweetness and respectful love, that no one could converse with him without becoming both pleased and interested.

After having spent a few days very pleasantly in Waterville, James started, with his mother, in the same steamer, on Thursday, July 24th, to return to Hallowell. The afternoon was delightfully pleasant, and the fresh breeze, with the tide and steam, carried us rapidly on our way. The company on board was not large, but very pleasant,

and such as suited the taste of little James. Many on board soon became much interested in his manly tone of conversation; and, upon his giving a very interesting lecture upon the subject of *tobacco*, seeing it was pretty freely used by many of the gentlemen, some were actually induced, for that time at least, out of respect to him, to lay it away. One gentleman, who urged his argument on the ground of its making him more *healthy*, was much pleased with the manner in which his young antagonist met him. Said James, "My father never chewed a grain of tobacco, nor smoked a cigar, in his life, and he is *fifty years old*, and *he* never was sick." The gentleman gave in that "James had the floor." The conversation passed very pleasantly, as some who heard him at that time, and who may read these pages, will undoubtedly recollect; especially when he gave an account of his religious belief, of the doctrines he should preach should he conclude to follow the profession of his father, and of the hap-

piness which he had always enjoyed in "doing good."

About this time there had been a severe freshet on the Kennebec, and much loss of property had been realized by the large quantity of logs which had been carried away by the strong and rapid current; and, of the company on board, there were a number whose business it was to rescue for the owners these floating timbers. Now our little boy was much delighted, as the sight to him was somewhat novel, to see these large members of the forest come sailing so leisurely and carelessly along, without sail or rudder. While the boat was "hauled up" at one of her stopping-places to "take in freight," James was very pleasantly amusing himself in seeing those mastless "craft" pass so very unceremoniously by, without giving to their superiors the least attention. As he stood gazing in this way, suddenly he gave a loud cry, and a dozen voices at once gave the alarm, "Little James' hat is *overboard!*" "Down with

the boat!" "Get the hat!" "Get the hat!" was the word. Poor little James wept aloud to see his beautiful "light beaver," which he had so much admired, and for which he had even been complimented by the present company, very grandly sailing down the Kennebec, entirely regardless of the pain and disappointment it was inflicting on its young and agonized owner. Just at this moment, when all hope of rescue was abandoned, a light and nimble-footed log-man, who stood first in his profession, caught a spear, and jumped upon a log which had at that moment chosen to come within stepping distance. In a moment, to the delight of some and the terror of others on board, he was fast sailing down the rapid stream, upon this single log of a few feet in length, and only a spear to guide or balance with. All was anxiety on board, while a deep interest was felt for the dear boy, who stood looking, with tearful eyes, upon his favorite floating hat, which had now gone the distance of half a mile. "He will be drowned!"

cried one; —"No, he will get the *hat*," responded another; and presently the sound came with joyous peal, "*He has got it!— he has got it!*" A thrill of pleasure seemed to pervade all hearts, as he elevated upon his spear the rescued treasure. It was then placed upon the log for "safe keeping," and, with a skill which but few could equal, he "neared" the boat, which had now proceeded on her way, but which "hove to" for his accommodation; and, having gained his "hold," he relinquished his temporary craft, and, amid shouts of joy, delivered to Master James the loved lost hat. All were delighted at his success, while the young owner seemed perfectly overcome with gratitude and love for the one who had so nobly sacrificed his own ease and braved danger for his sake. After the hat had been safely deposited in a proper place to be dried, and James had been furnished with one for temporary use, he very manfully and thoughtfully took from his pocket his wallet, and, taking out a two-dollar bill, which

he said he had received for being good at school, he insisted that the gentleman should take half of it, at least. "No, no, my noble boy," said the generous man, "you have more than *paid* me; and the thought that I could please so good a boy as you is the best pay I want." Little James, seeing he could not prevail upon the gentleman to take the money, told him he should "send him a book, to remunerate him for his kindness," — a promise which he did not forget. The hat was dried, and before the boat arrived at Hallowell it was replaced upon his head, and again he looked like "Master James."

This little hat was ever held by him, after this remarkable adventure, with feelings of deep interest; and even when it had ceased to perform its accustomed office, he had it carefully laid away, to be kept as a remembrance of his pleasant visit to Maine, and the "*lost hat.*"

CHAPTER IV.

HIS LOVE OF PRAYER.

THE subject of prayer, beautiful as it is, is seldom appreciated according to the great and happy results of its sincere and rational exercise. How elevating to the mind, how soothing to the feelings, and how strengthening to the whole spiritual being, is the devout aspiration of the soul, when, in confidence and love, we can approach the throne of divine grace in holy supplication and prayer! But we come not to our heavenly Father in this attitude as if our prayers could affect his purposes and designs, or his will concerning us.

It has been a question in curious minds, If the Deity is not to be influenced by our supplications, of what use is prayer? Prayer is an appointed means of drawing the soul to God, nourishing holy affections, trans-

ferring in a measure the power of God to the feeble suppliant, and placing us in an attitude to receive and enjoy Heaven's loving favors. Prayer is the outstretched hand by which we take hold of the Almighty arm, and find rest in his love. If we believed that our prayers could change the mind of God, we should hardly dare to pray; for we are incompetent to direct the counsels of Jehovah. But, with our faith in God, and our blissful appreciation of the purpose of prayer, we can "pray always," and pray in faith, assured that our communions will be the medium of the good unto which they are appointed.

It was in this way that little James always seemed to enjoy near and sweet communion with his Father in heaven. From his infancy he ever manifested a deep love for this delightful exercise, and a strong and natural desire to engage in it. And when the members of the household were assembled for family devotion, such was the sincere and devout manner in which he always

joined in this pleasant exercise, that his infant mind would rise in unison with those much older than himself, and seem equally to enjoy the high satisfaction which fervent prayer is calculated to impart. It was his invariable rule to fold his hands, close his eyes, and seemingly to shut from his mind and thoughts everything which might interfere with a state of feeling appropriate to the sacredness and solemnity of the occasion.

For himself, when alone, or in company with his mother, or any one who might have the immediate care of him, at his appointed time he would repeat the "Lord's prayer," until after the severe attack which commenced his last sickness, which was on Saturday night, May 24, 1851. He had been very sick through the first part of the night, insomuch that his physician thought his recovery doubtful. But as morning approached, he became quite comfortable; and having enjoyed some quiet rest, he felt much refreshed. As his mother sat by him

the next morning, he very smilingly looked up, and said, "Mother, as God has been so kind as to relieve me of my distress, and let me live longer with you, I think I ought to say something *more* than my little prayer that I have always said when I was well." He then requested that his mother would begin from that time, and pray with him every day, until he could learn to pray himself. His request was granted, and he chose the place for this pleasant meeting of mother and child, with the promise that it should never be neglected, and that, should he not live, the same place should be daily visited by his "dear mother," where, he said, his *spirit* should always meet her. Another request was, that the prayer should always close with the same words, so that he could join in the conclusion of the supplication. He requested that it should end thus, "*which favors we ask for Christ's sake. Amen.*" This request was granted; and as long as his strength would permit him to speak, he never omitted to repeat

simultaneously these words. And after his recovery from this severe attack, so much did he appreciate this daily communion, he requested that, when convenient, it might be enjoyed in the morning, before leaving the room, that nothing might interfere to carry it far into the day. He felt that *God* should have our morning thanks, and that *we* should ask for guidance from him through the day; and if, from any circumstance, this exercise was for a short time omitted in the first part of the day, he would say, "Mother, I do not feel *happy* until we have prayed." Indeed, prayer seemed to become a part of his life, and was the medium of much, very much, of his permanent enjoyment. And he would often wish that he could have "all the little boys," who were not learned to pray, "come in," and be taught, as he had been, to look to God in prayer. "I know," he would say, "if they would learn to *pray*, they would not then *swear* about God." And often would he express his gratitude that he had early been taught to pray, and

to pray to God as his Father and Friend. And during his last sickness, when unfavorable sensations in the evening would render him apprehensive that he should have an uncomfortable night, and when, after his "sweet prayer," as he called it, he would fall quietly asleep, often the first sound that would greet the ears of her who was always by his side would be the outburstings of his thankful heart, as he awoke in the night from his peaceful slumber, "Mother, *has not* God heard our prayer?" "I think he has." "*Have* not the angels watched around my pillow?" And then, with confiding love, he would again fall quietly asleep, and the morning light would again echo with the sweet praises of his thankful heart; and thus, from day to day, and from night to night, would he live in the exercise of that faith in holy communion with God, which gave to his young heart the enjoyment of the Father's presence, and the assurance of his unfailing love.

After his heavenly "vision" (for which

see chapter VI.), and his communion with those "beautiful angels," he felt that he must go still further; he felt that God had done still more for him, and that *he* must do *more* to serve God; and by his request the family were assembled for evening devotion, and this sainted child led in one of the most devout and earnest strains of prayer and praise that ever came from the lips of mortal man. He was so divinely assisted that no fear seemed in the least to impair his voice or check his words. And it was not anything that he had learned, or any common form of words, but it was the outgushing of heavenly and sincere desires, including all ranks, conditions, and circumstances of his heavenly Father's children, with the earnest wish that "they might *be* good, and live to *do* good." And often after this, until his sweet release from earth, would he lead the family in the same holy and devout exercise. The day before his departure from earth, for the first time for almost a year, he was too feeble to join in

all the closing part, in which he had so much delighted to participate vocally. But his hearty "amen" will never be forgotten. This was the last time his devoted mother enjoyed this blessed privilege with this precious child of heaven. He was resting upon his couch, reclining his feeble head upon his "dear mother," when for the last time her voice was lifted in prayer with this dear treasure, which she felt was soon to be removed from earthly sounds, to join in holier prayer and praise around that bright and spotless throne, where, with pure, seraphic beings, he had even here held sweet communion. And, seeming himself to read her prayer, and feel that he was soon to unite with Christ and his angels in higher spheres, he gave his cordial "*amen*," and remained for a while in silent thought. Knowing how very weak he was, he was permitted to enjoy his own silent and heavenly contemplations.

This was nearly noon, on Monday. Monday night, when he with the rest of the

family had urged his mother to retire to another apartment for the first time, for brief repose, she went to him, and found him so feeble that she thought she would bid him a "good-night," and wait for further communion until she should join him, according to appointment, at one o'clock. But, after leaving the room, fearing he might wish to join in some expression before she retired, she returned, and, after receiving and imprinting the *last kiss*, she put her mouth to his ear, assuring him that "*the angels would take care of us*," to which he sweetly responded. And it was even so; for when she again looked upon that dear face, the angels *had* taken care of him, and sweetly conveyed him home, where a mother's prayers were no longer needed, but where He who said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven," would perfect that praise which was so beautifully and faithfully commenced on earth!

CHAPTER V.

VISIT TO WORCESTER, AND THE LITTLE PAPER-BOY.

LITTLE James was always much pleased to travel, and especially so when his ride would take him into the country. He was a great admirer of nature, and always took much delight in viewing the goodness of his heavenly Father, as manifested through his beautiful and manifold works.

As his father had an appointment to preach in Worcester on the third Sunday in August, 1851, it was proposed that James and his mother should accompany him. This suited the dear boy much, as it was so pleasant a season of the year to journey through the country, and behold the beauties of nature. On the way to W., Saturday afternoon, one of the most violent thunder-storms for the season was experi-

enced, and the rain fell in torrents. This James also enjoyed; for, from his infancy, he had always loved the sound of the thunder-storm; — and even when danger was apprehended, so much would he love to hear the most terrific thunder, that he would be unwilling to leave the window where he could behold it in all its fulness and grandeur. And this was the last time he looked upon the full and perfect *rainbow*. This, too, was a sight which always filled him with satisfaction and delight. It would seem to inspire him with renewed confidence in Him whose promise is so beautifully read in that bright emblem of his parental faithfulness which he has "set in the cloud."

On arriving at Worcester, the scene was admirable beyond description. The setting sun was just leaving his last sweet tint upon the western sky, while the full-orbed moon was gently rising in all her silent majesty, humbly waiting to resume her reign, when the sun should resign his

throne. The deep-green foliage with which this pleasant city is so richly ornamented was hanging in sparkling drops, beautifully representing heaven's choicest diamonds, while the feathered songsters were vocal with the praise of Him whose love and goodness is felt

"In the void waste, as in the city full."

The happy mind of James, which had been a lively participant in all the rich variety of scenery, was filled to overflowing; and when he laid his head upon his pillow, his infant voice was heard in offering his evening thanks to that beneficent Being who had kindly given him a heart to feel and a soul to enjoy.

The following Sunday was one of nature's choicest days, and early was James ready for the sanctuary. As the place of meeting was near, and he was kindly assisted, he was able to attend church all day, — a privilege which he had not enjoyed for some time before, and which he never en-

joyed afterwards, as his feeble state of health would not admit of his attending more than one service on a Sabbath. He was very happy, and at the close of the day he remarked, "This has been the happiest day I ever spent." The thought that he had been able to attend meeting all day, and hear his "dear father preach," and witness the deep interest manifested as the gospel was presented in its fulness and glory, filled him with that which

> "Nothing earthly gives or can destroy,
> The soul's calm sunshine and a heartfelt joy."

Monday, too, was a continuation of that series of sweet summer days, which are often realized after copious rains, and at the full of the moon. As James had been promised a pleasant ride, by Esquire Green, of Worcester, who owns a delightful country-seat about two miles from the city, he was early dressed for the excursion. As he was sitting by the window of his chamber, which looked out upon the main street,

he saw a little, lame, hump-backed boy coming up to the hotel with the morning papers. He immediately left the room, and soon returned with a paper for his mother, which he had purchased of "the poor little lame boy." No sooner had he delivered that, than his sympathies for the meek and dependent looking boy induced him to go down and buy another, which he brought to his father. He then wished to know "if he might not buy a number more, as he had money enough with him, which had been given him for being good, and he wanted to do *good* with it." But, on being told that, as they were all of one kind, he might again encourage his "poor boy" the *next* morning, he was willing to wait, by assuring him that he should not be forgotten.

One fine and commendable trait in the character of young James was, that he always sympathized with the unfortunate; and often would his playmates, and even those to whom he was inferior in *size*, re-

ceive from him a gentle rebuke for unkind words or rude treatment to those who were lame or unfortunate. And often has he left his play with the "boys," and retired to his own yard, with a little deaf boy of his own neighborhood, and played with him alone, because others would halloo in his ears and hector him. And this little "paper-boy" was never forgotten by his young and sympathizing friend. When, after his decease, his little things which had amused him in his last sickness were looked over to be arranged agreeably to his request, the wallet was found, which he had carefully laid away to carry, if he should be able to visit Worcester the next summer, to give to the deformed "paper-boy." This he had purposed, because, when he bought his papers of him, he had no purse for his money, and he was afraid he might lose some of his change.

After James had read the morning news, Esquire Green called, with his carriage, and James (with his little whip, which he had

purchased the day before he left home, thinking he might have an opportunity to use it), accompanied by his mother, took a seat for his ride. He was pleased with the privilege of driving the "family horse," while the opening beauties around seemed to inspire him with new and increased strength. On arriving at the residence of Esquire Green, he was delighted with the beautiful flowers and trees, and the rich berries and fruits, which were abundantly presented on every side. And here, for the first time in his life, he saw ripe apples shaken from the tree; and so delighted was the good old gentleman that the sight so much pleased his young visiter, that he almost robbed his "early favorite tree" of its ripened contents, to allow him to run after and pick them up. This was to James a rich treat. He walked around, plucking the flowers, and partaking of the rich berries and fruits, and enjoying the wide-extended scenery. After partaking of further hospitalities, he returned with a

light heart to his temporary home. In the afternoon he was accompanied to another part of the city, where, having everything to add to his enjoyment, he passed the rest of the day in accordance with his own happy feelings.

His visit was made very agreeable to him, as his home was at Wait's Temperance Hotel, one of the best houses in the country. The circumstance that he could be at a "public house" for a number of days, and not witness any "drinking," or "swearing," not only filled him with surprise, but added much to his enjoyment.

Tuesday morning, leaving his father in Worcester, and with a heart filled with gratitude to God for the enjoyment of such a visit, he returned with his mother to Boston, saying, "I never shall forget my visit to Worcester."

CHAPTER VI.

THE VISION.

On Saturday evening, Dec. 6th, 1851, between two and three months before his death, as he was thought to be dying, little James was favored with a most remarkable vision of the spirit-world. An account of it was published in the Christian Freeman of Dec. 19th, 1851, and its obvious traits of reality have carried the richest comfort to the hearts of many, whom it has confirmed in the assurance that our departed friends, though invisible to us in the body, can draw nigh to us, and take an interest in our welfare. Many have been the manifestations, especially to children, at or near the closing moment, which are reasonably regarded as the real greetings of friends from the land they are about entering,—coming in, not as a link in a visible chain

of present circumstances and suggestions, but as a foreign incident; and also presenting views, thoughts and words, above the natural conceptions of the little child.

The account of the vision of which I speak was written in the form of a letter to Mrs. H. F. M. Brown, of Cleveland, Ohio; and as it was written immediately after the event, and under the promptings of the little boy, I transcribe it in this place.

THE VISION.

East Boston, Dec. 11th, 1851.

SISTER BROWN: This is indeed the *Castle of Peace* and the home of blessedness; and, although trials and sorrows have visited us for a few weeks past, yet great has been our joy and peace. Our heavenly Father has seen fit, in his all-wise providence, to lay his chastening hand upon us; nevertheless his loving kindness he has not withheld.

Our little darling boy Jimmy, whom you will remember, has been for several weeks

very sick, and twice have we thought that we should very soon be deprived of his sweet and valuable society. His sickness is enlargement of the heart, occasioned, as we suspect, by a kick from a horse, which he received, while at play upon the green, about three years ago. Within a year it has assumed a somewhat dangerous form; and recently, owing to a severe cough, it has reduced him to a very feeble state. But he is a happy child; and although, for the last eight months, he has not been able to attend school, or enjoy the usual plays with his little mates, yet he never has been heard to offer one murmur or complaint. And even now, when his sufferings have been great, not a word of complaint has escaped his lips. He has ever been calm and reconciled, always manifesting the greatest confidence in the unerring wisdom of his Father in heaven. You undoubtedly recollect his philosophical reasoning upon the character and purposes of God, as exhibited when you visited us, nearly two

years since. That same development of mind has grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength; and, in his present sickness, the workings of his little mind have been wonderful indeed. He has never expressed the least fear of death, and has viewed it as a "sweet falling asleep;" and the only regret he has expressed was, that he thought *we* should feel lonesome without him.

And now, sister Brown, could you have enjoyed the happy scene which we were permitted to enjoy with this child of faith and holy trust, on Saturday evening last, you would have felt that you were admitted to the entertainment of angels. He had been more unwell than usual through the day; and, towards evening, when alone with his eldest sister, he calmly looked up and said, smilingly, "Haley, I think *this* is the *last night* I shall spend with you." He was perfectly calm and reconciled, and said, "When I am an *angel*, I shall not *suffer* as I now do;" and he promised, if

he did go to heaven first, he "would come and be one of our guardian angels." Soon after this, he closed his eyes, and, while laboring hard for breath, he exclaimed, "O, what a beautiful sight! See those little angels!" He was asked what they were doing. "Why, they have hold of hands, and are dancing in a circle around me, with wreaths on their heads. O, how happy they look! and they are whispering to each other. One of them says, 'Jimmy has been a *good little boy*, and we would like to have him come and be with us." Soon, he seemed delighted, and said, "See, there come some *older* angels, two at one end, and two at the other." Do you know who they are? he was asked. "Yes, uncle Eben is one (a very dear uncle of his who died about six months since); but there are a whole row of older ones now standing behind the little ones." He was asked if any of them were speaking to him.

"Yes; but I can't tell *you* as they tell

me, for they *sing* it beautifully. *We* can't sing so."

He was then asked to *tell* what they said.

"Keep still," said he; "don't talk, and I will listen and tell you."

"They say, 'Come, little Jimmy, and be happy with us.' "

"Grandma is speaking now. She says, 'You are a good little boy, Jimmy; and if you come now, I will take care of you.' "

"Uncle Eben is speaking now," said he. "He says Eunice and Hitty have been here to-day [these were his two daughters, who had spent the night with us]. Write, and tell them that I am happy; and if you do not get better, you shall come and be with me in this world of love and joy."

Again he spoke: "O, this is *Sally!*" [My feelings here were indescribable, for this was a dear sister of mine, who died before I was married, and whom he knew nothing about.] He was asked what *she said* to him. "She says, 'You have a good mother, Jimmy; but if you do not stay

with her, you will come here and be happy, and I will be like a sister to you.' "

After resting a few moments, apparently in deep thought, he turned to me, and calmly said, "Mother, I have *one* word more to say, and that is, if I should fall asleep, never more to awake, I want you all to live a happy family, in peace and love, and often think of your dear little boy Jimmy."

He then looked around the room, and inquired how many were present. On being told, he sweetly said, "There is *one* wanting — *my dear father.*" He was told that he should be immediately sent for, though we were fearful he might not arrive to see him, as he had been obliged to leave the city for a few hours. After this, he seemed more quiet, and asked "if we should *know* when he was dead." He felt that he was "falling asleep." On being assured that we *should* know, he remained as if going to sleep for some moments; and then brightening up, he said, with a stronger voice, "I guess I shall live longer; I don't

think I shall die now; and the *angels* said, 'if I *did not* get better, I should come and be with them,' and the angels are leaving me." In a few moments he said, "They are going;" and again, "They are all gone." He seemed to see many who were waiting for him, and all appeared happy.

Shortly after this, he turned to speak to his little niece, who stood beside him, when he said, "O, no! there is *one* angel flying around in the air, with a wreath on its little finger. *This* is my *guardian* angel."

From this time he began to revive, and in a few hours, assisted by our excellent family physician, Dr. Crane, he was so far recovered from his distress that, by his request, we joined with him, being led by his angelic voice, in offering to the Father of mercies our united thanks for such a wonderful manifestation of infinite goodness. And, could you now hear the fervent supplications which his infant voice sends forth from the family altar, when we are assembled for our daily devotion, you would think that

his tongue was touched with a live coal from off the altar of the God of prayer.

His father had now joined us, and our souls were raised in thanksgiving to heaven, that he could again clasp to his bosom this treasured object of his paternal affection; and much did it add to the happiness of our darling, waiting boy.

I have been particular in writing, knowing you would be pleased to be informed of such a remarkable manifestation of the holy spirit which shines with so resplendent a lustre in that glorious gospel which we have the happiness to receive. And I have given it to you precisely as it came from his sweet lips; for this heavenly scene threw over my whole soul such a calm and peaceful influence, that I was prepared to take the sentences upon paper as he delivered them to us. I was able to be at liberty to perform this pleasant task, for his faithful sister, Haley, was his close attendant during this season of his severe suffering, and could easily distinguish every word he

uttered. And, so great was his desire that his "dear father" should enjoy this scene with us, that he *requested* that I should write it all down for him to see, as he feared he might not return until he should cease speaking.

You recollect his age, which will be nine years the twenty-second of this month. But, although a child in years, he is a man in mind. He remains perfectly conscious of everything which transpired on Saturday evening, and can accurately relate every incident. And although he has become very comfortable, he cheerfully rests his life, and all, upon his heavenly Father's will. He says he has "*two* homes — one with the angels, and one with his friends on earth." When asked if he could *describe* to us the angels, he said he "could not, for he knew of nothing on the *earth* so beautiful, — they were clothed in white, and dwelt in light."

It seems as though he had brought heaven to earth for us, and we could realize

in some degree the joys of the upper world. We feel that he has already performed a holy mission, and can but hope that his work is not yet done. If it is the wise design of Heaven that he should be spared, it would be to us a great source of happiness and joy.

He sends much love to you, and hopes you will come and see us, as you promise in your last, and that he may be able to enjoy with you more of those pleasant walks.

Wishing that his desires may be answered, I am, dear sister,

Affectionately thine,

E. H. C.

The foregoing is the narration of that remarkable converse with immortals which was published immediately after. But there are circumstances accompanying that intercourse, as it progressed, which have a bearing upon the question of its reality, — that is, the real presence of his heavenly visitants, — which I will add in this place.

The question has been asked, "How was

James at the time of his 'vision'?" "Had he taken medicine that would be likely to throw him into a dreamy state? or, was he awake, and conscious of what was transpiring?" These queries were made in his presence after the event; and the thought, to him, that such questions should even be *asked*, seemed to fill him with grief. No visit on *earth* was ever enjoyed by him with more rational pleasure than was this visit from those "beautiful angels" of heaven. He had not been asleep through the day, and, although quite feeble, he had not complained much until towards night, when he so impressively said to his sister, who was watching by him, "*Haley, I think this is the last night I shall spend with you.*" These words were entirely voluntary on the part of little James; and although his sister, on hearing this unexpected remark, and having it made to her in such an impressive manner, was affected to tears, he remained calm, and seemed perfectly to understand what he had said, and to realize its import-

ance. At this point of time, when his mind was so perfectly clear, and cognizant of things as they were, was the commencement of his "vision."

He had not taken medicine to affect him, neither was his mind in the least impaired by disease. Indeed, he *never* took medicine, in the least, to affect his mind; and not until within two days of his death did his *mind* seem in the slightest degree affected. At the time of his "vision," he was not asleep, but sensible to everything passing around him. If any in the room were speaking when one of his beautiful messengers was about to address him, he would promptly request them to be "still," saying, "Hark! don't make a noise; for such an one [naming the person] wants to speak to me. I want to hear, and then I will tell you what is said." He would then listen smilingly, and, on receiving the message in full, would turn his head and recite it to us in measured tones, and with emphatic precision. As his sister placed

her hand upon his forehead in order to support his head, he instantly said, "Don't put your hand on there, Haley; for I see the angels through my forehead. I don't see them, as I do you, through my eyes."

When he had called the name of my sister who had been dead over thirty years, and of whom he knew nothing at all, on hearing him say, "O, there is *Sally!*"— as that was the name by which she was always called,— I turned from him, and unavoidably wept aloud. Fearing I should disturb him, I went toward the window, when he opened his eyes and requested me to return to him, saying, "You *may weep*, mother; it don't hurt *me!*" And the next day, when I asked him *how he knew* that it was my sister, as he had never known anything of her, said he, "O, she told me it was *Sally*, before she told me the rest."

When the vision was withdrawn, there was no change with him, as arousing from a dream; it was as if some of his loved neighbors had made him a call, and retired.

And ever after he would talk as familiarly of the "angels" as though they had visited him in the body. In all his subsequent prayers, he would devoutly thank God that he had *sent him his angels* to teach him of the beauties of his heavenly home. And so perfect was his assurance of a future abode with them, in that "beautiful world of peace and joy," that death had for him no terror, and the grave no cloud. Indeed, there was to him no grave, but a passing upward to a higher mansion in his Father's house.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MISSIONARY-BOX.

JAMES ARTHUR was a child who ever took great delight in attending public worship, and hearing "about Jesus." Often has he gone out to meeting when he was quite unwell, because, as he would express it, "I feel that I want to do everything I can for the service of *God*, because he has done so much for me." And when he was not able to attend church, he would often hold a meeting of his own, going through with all the performances in regular, perfect order, and in such a manner as would well interest an audience of maturer minds.

When he had become so weak that he could not interest himself in this way, his mind, which was ever devising purposes for good, never became idle. He was still interested to know what he could do to

show those around him his love of the gospel, and thereby benefit both himself and others. His mind, upon the paternity of God, and upon his boundless love and mercy, as well as his strict and impartial justice, was wonderfully formed, and immovably fixed. He would sit for hours and converse upon these subjects; and many times, during his last sickness, he would warmly express his thankfulness and delight, that he had been taught as he had respecting his God and Saviour. In conversation with his mother upon this subject, of what some believe of the character of God, he very emphatically remarked, "*I* think it is *wicked* for folks to believe so about God! Do you think, mother, that *you* love me better than God does? and would you put me into a place to burn me, or into a place where I should never see you again? I know, if we do wrong, God will punish us for it; but he loves us, and wants us to be *good*, and would punish us,

as you would *your* children, until we are willing to be good."

In conversation with his mother a short time previous to his death, upon the great value of the gospel, and its beautiful adaptedness to our wants under all circumstances, he said, "I wish all could know the gospel, as it is taught in the Bible." At his request, his mother had commenced reading aloud to him the New Testament, explaining it as she read, both doctrinally and practically; and well did he treasure up and appreciate its beautiful teachings. On being told that all could not enjoy the privilege of hearing the gospel as *he* so happily believed it, he inquired the reason why they could not. He was told that there were many places where they were not able to support a regular ministry, and could but seldom hear the love of God preached as he believed it. On being told that the "Missionary Societies" were formed in order that means might be used to carry the gospel to the needy and the

destitute, he was much pleased, and wished to know if he could not join the missionary cause, and "give some of *his* money for so good an object."

This suggestion opened to the mind of his mother a new subject, and she proposed to James the pleasant expedient of forming a *Juvenile Missionary Society*, such as had been formed in other denominations of Christians. With this the dear boy was at once delighted; and he immediately desired that he might have a "box" procured for him, as had been described, into which he could put his cent a week, to be given to the missionary cause. "I intend," said he, "to put in my fifty-two cents for the year, that you may carry it over to the meeting in May, and give it as my part." He then wished to be assured that a request should be made by his mother at that time to have "a Juvenile Missionary Society," and let his name be put down as the first to join it. "I think," he said, "that all good little children would be

willing to put into a box one cent a week; and that, at the end of the year, would make a good deal to help send the gospel to poor children who cannot now hear it." He was much gratified when he was assured that all should be done according to his request; and that, should his health permit, he should be present to write his own name. The happiness that he enjoyed seemed to inspire him with a desire that other children should unite in that which, while it would add to their *own enjoyment*, would be the means of making happy those poor and destitute children whose situation, in this respect, was less favorable.

When the "box" was opened, after little James had joined a higher society in heaven above, it was found to contain fifty cents, which he had already deposited, that he might have his year's account ready. The money was replaced, and the box put away, to be taken to the meeting for which he had designed it.

This good boy did not live to see his

design carried into execution; but it is to be hoped that others will carry forward the work which his pious heart conceived, until the gospel, in all its purity and love, shall be borne to those who now sit in darkness, and life, light and immortality, shall shine upon their earthly pathway, purify their hearts, and overcome death and the grave, with the same glorious victory that was so abundantly awarded to this Christian child.

The case of the "Missionary-box" is but an instance illustrating the general character of little James in respect to the use of his money. It was but a little that he wished to spend for the mere gratification of appetite and fancy. He took the greatest interest in drawing upon his little resources for the purpose of doing some form of good; and it was with the noblest satisfaction that he would do anything in his power for any measure which aimed at the improvement of society. When, for instance, it was proposed, in his hearing, that a subscription should be raised to

cushion and carpet the ministerial pew in the church he attended, it struck his quick and apprehensive mind, at once, that this would be a very suitable expression of kindness and respect for the family of him who was laboring to promote the interests of the gospel, and he claimed the privilege of putting in a quarter of a dollar, for his part of the subscription. Though this took off a large part of what he then had in fund, yet there was no selfish and childish use of it that had any consequence in his mind, when he could do something with it that would sustain the means of good to the community. There dwelt in him, in an ever active state, the spirit of the apostolic injunction, "To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifice God is well pleased."

CHAPTER VIII.

HIS VIEWS OF DEATH.

THERE is, with mankind in general, a natural dread of death. The thought that we must die fills most minds with gloom; and there is a natural desire to put "far away" the subject, as one partaking too much of sadness and melancholy.

But to the mind of little James death could hardly be said to be fraught with terror. There was not in the subject anything unpleasant for him to contemplate. Often would he remark that he should be no more afraid to die than he should to lie down to go to *sleep*. He felt that going to sleep from the labors and fatigues of the day did not shut us out from the presence, or deprive us of the constant guardianship, of our Father in heaven. And so he believed, that should he lie down to sleep

the sleep of death, to rest from the cares and toils of earth, to awake in another world, even that would no more shut him out from the presence of his God and Father in heaven than would the sleep of a *night.* He loved the saying, "that neither *life* nor *death* can separate us from the love of God." I have had occasion, in another chapter, to refer to the circumstance of his fondness of being entertained with reading; and a few months before his death, as his mother was engaged in reading Abbott's histories of distinguished characters, he would request to have her read aloud. On coming to the life of "Cleopatra," so much of it was filled with crime and wickedness, that it was not thought proper for him to hear it. It was therefore proposed that after it was finished a synopsis of the work should be given, and he be saved from hearing those parts which he would not so well enjoy. His mind was so sensitive and sympathetic, that it was thought best to avoid having

unfavorable impressions made upon it, by the reading of that which was more *cruel* than good. After the work was finished, his mother gave him a synopsis of its most interesting parts, and spoke of Cleopatra's having many of her prisoners put to death by different descriptions of poison, in order that she might thereby determine which would produce the easiest death, in case she should wish to take her own life. For this she had resolved on doing, rather than fall into the hands of the Romans. After listening to the various modes of death produced by this monster in human form, he sat silent for a while, and then, turning to his mother, he said, "Mother, I will tell you which *I* think would be the best way for any one to die!" Thinking he had been revolving in his mind the different modes adopted by the Queen of Egypt, and made up his mind from that, he was asked which *he* thought would be the easiest. "I think," said he, "the best way for any one to die is to *die in peace, when God wants*

to have them die!" These were his precise words; and the answer from the mother was, "My child, that is an answer that would well befit a *king*."

During his last sickness, he would often introduce the subject of death, and converse upon it with apparent satisfaction. Indeed, it seemed as though he was not only preparing his own mind for the coming event, but he wished that the minds of all around him should not be unpleasantly affected by it. So great was his faith in God, that the "dead should be raised," and we "should all live again," that the thought of passing into that heavenly state was to him a pleasant one; and, young as he was, he had done much to prepare his mind for the event, cheered with the pleasant reflection of a life well spent, and duties well performed. This, with a knowledge of the gospel, is what he thought would enable one to die in peace.

A few days before his death, as if he would give his last message of peace, when

alone with his mother, he introduced the subject of dying. Said he, "Mother, I wish we could die together, with our arms around each other's neck, and then I think they would bury us so. They could put us both into one coffin, and we could always be together." After some conversation upon the subject, which greatly comforted him, in which he was promised that, if we did not *die* together, we should be *laid* together, and after requesting that, should he die first, he should often be visited at his grave, with great emphasis he made some remarks which were a sweet solace and a balm for the saddened heart. "Mother," continued he, "if you should again think me to be dying, as you did when I had the *vision*, I don't want you to weep because you think I am suffering; for when you went away from me and cried, because you thought I was suffering so much, I did not think anything about my *sufferings;* all I was thinking of was those beautiful angels, and how happy I should be when I came to be with

them." These were his words, and deep did they sink into the mother's heart. At this time the family were much encouraged, as his appearance indicated a partial recovery from his feeble state of health; and it was thought that, as the spring approached, he might be much better. But he probably knew his own feelings best, and was thereby differently impressed; and so unwilling was he that any one should "grieve," that every exertion on his part was made for the greatest enjoyment of those around him. And so it was. After having made every arrangement with regard to his clothes, such as he wished to have preserved, and as he thought it would be a satisfaction for us to look upon, and had done everything he could to prepare the minds of those he so dearly loved to part with him, he seemed to feel that he had nothing more to do. His mind was at rest. His whole soul was filled with sweet comfort and peace. He had nothing to regret; he had nothing more to ask. He had lived "to do good." And with his

mission well performed, and with his labors well done, he was ready to lie down to go "to sleep," that he might awake in the presence of those beautiful angels,

To wear that "wreath," and with those seraphs join,
In joys more pure, in labors more divine.

CHAPTER IX.

HIS EXIT, AND FUNERAL OBSEQUIES.

James Arthur departed this life at one o'clock in the morning, February 24, 1852. The account of this event, written by his father, and published in the Christian Freeman of March 5th, is the best I can present to the readers of this little volume. From the same editorial I also transcribe the sketch of the funeral services.

In the night of the dear boy's departure, as soon as the father could sufficiently control his feelings to use his pen, he hastened to write the following, that it might find place in the paper then about going to press:

Tuesday morning, Feb. 24th.

Our Bereavement. — Though our paper is filled, and ready for the press at early morn, yet we must pen a word for our readers in this midnight hour, asking their sym-

pathy in our bereavement. Our blessed boy, James Arthur, the youngest of our nine children, fell calmly asleep this morning, at one o'clock. Our hearts bleed for the sundering of ties so tender and so strong; but O, the blessed comfort of gospel faith, of which this little one was so bright an example! He has long contemplated, with serene and pleasant emotions, the passing hence to the world of painless, deathless life and glory. And now his sufferings are over, and he has joined the angel band that came weeks ago to greet and bid him welcome. The God of grace and comfort be with us. Amen.

But that week's paper had gone to press before the above item reached the office; and the next week's issue contained the following:

Our last week's paper went to press before the above paragraph reached our office, and we let it go to our readers as it is, this week.

"*Our darling's gone.*" Never shall we forget this announcement, and the indescribable tones of resigned and affectionate pathos by which we were awaked from our slumbers at one o'clock last Tuesday morning week. Two hours before, we had left our boy in the care of his eldest sister and her husband, and retired for brief repose; and at one o'clock that sister glided to our bed-side, and pathetically exclaimed, "*Our darling's gone.* Father! Mother! *Our darling's gone!*" O, the indescribable sensations produced by this announcement! Twenty-nine and a half years have passed since we united in the sacred ties which made us one for life and forever, and nine children have been given us to form and bless our family circle; and never before has one of the circle "gone," to be with us in the body no more.

We arose quickly, and hastened to our little charge, and indeed he was quiet and at rest. O, the bleeding of severed ties, and mingled thankfulness to God! We

knew he could live but to suffer. *He* could see no prospect of living but to suffer; and he wished to go and be at rest. That night he had said to his watching sister, "Haley, I wish I could die;—when can I die?" And his wish was granted in a most beautiful manner. He had called for water, and on its being given him, he energetically pronounced it good. "Now," said he, "fix my pillow." She fixed his pillow, and he reclined his head upon it, saying, "That is nice." Immediately his sister, standing over him, saw his head drop slightly forward (for he was bolstered up in a sitting posture), and she looked, and saw that his spirit had gone. Not a struggle nor a gasp accompanied or followed its departure. That heaven-visited and angel-welcomed spirit was prepared to pass gently out from its earthly tenement, without another jar to a chord or muscle of that tenement. And the angelic band who had held intercourse with him, and whose converse he ever after continued to contemplate with sweetest

pleasure, were the associates and convoy of that freed spirit, according to their promise. O God, we thank thee! Thy hand, in this providence, has not sunk us deeper down, but it has raised us nearer to heaven. O God, we thank thee for thy grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

We will not tax our readers with the recital of the hundred little mementoes of this precious boy, as we find his handiworks in the different departments of our dwelling, for these things are more suitable for our own family converse than for public record. Suffice it now to say that, though James Arthur made so short a stay with us here, — but little more than nine years, — he has lived a great life, and performed an important mission. Every member of our family feels that we could not, without insufferable loss, part with the instructions which he has given us. His clear, logical reasonings on doctrines of faith, his strong filial confidence in God, his full and glorious hope of immortality and glory, all brought out in various

conversations; his living piety, his pure devotions, his sweet contentment, his triumphant patience and resignation in suffering, saying he did not realize suffering, because his mind was engrossed in pleasant heavenly themes; — all, all have instructed, and will instruct and bless us. Precious child! we will be together in spirit. Thus shalt thou still be one of our circle, and bless us.

We will add, that Fathers Ballou and Streeter were present at the funeral, and assisted our pastor, Br. Webster, in the services; and the spirit of God and of heaven inspired their sympathetic souls, and their words of consolation and prayer were the dews of heaven to our wounded hearts; — and our sympathizing friend, S. D. Hadley, and his associates, soothed our spirits with their sweet and beautiful chants. By the kind offices of Messrs. Bowker and Fuller, the former a trustee, and the latter treasurer, of Woodlawn Cemetery, it was arranged for our bearing the remains to a new receiv-

ing tomb in that cemetery. The sun, near his setting, shone out mildly as we gathered around the bier, at the entrance of the sepulchre. The brothers and sisters, a band of seven, were simultaneously moved to sing there the beautiful piece,

"Brother, thou wast mild and lovely, —
Gentle as the summer breeze;"

and this unexpected service inspired the father to there bow in prayer, and lift up his voice in praise to God, for that religion which abolishes death, dissipates the darkness of the tomb, and fills it with thoughts of life and glory. Returning to our habitation, with unavoidable feelings of loneliness at times, we feel that God is with us, who doeth all things well.

SYLVANUS and EUNICE HALE COBB.

We subjoin the tributes of other members of the family:

TRIBUTE OF THE ELDEST BROTHER.

DEAR MOTHER:

An angel messenger passed o'er the earth,
Plucking sweet flowers to grace the diadem

Of God. Some soul of purity he sought, —
Some spirit meek, that longed to put away
The clod of earth, and bound, all joyously,
Within the sphere of Love and Truth eternal.
That soul — that flower — the angel found with us;
'T was one of us; our sweetest, fairest one,
In that it was our youngest. He plucked it,
And bore it off to God.
Now doubly dear
Is heaven to us all. That chain of ours,
Wherein each kindred soul formed one strong link,
Has reached the throne of Him who ruleth us
For good. It is not broke, nor shall it ever be;
Only the transmutation has begun.
The mortal is now immortal, and that
Celestial link has raised us all toward heaven.
Our youngest was the first to be with God
At home. The next, the next, and still the next, —
It matters not which, when, or how; but yet
All, all will go to that bright home, and all
Will be a band unbroken still for aye,
In that soul's sphere, where all is joy, and peace,
And truth, and love, forevermore.
Dear James,
Come to us oft, and bless us with thyself
In spirit presence. God shall have the praise.

SYLVANUS, JR.

TRIBUTE OF THE ELDEST SISTER.

On the falling asleep of Dear Brother Jimmy.

Our darling one has gone,
Our youngest and our best,

To where the wicked cease from strife,
The weary are at rest.

His sweet, angelic voice
We shall no longer hear;
But his bright spirit-presence pure,
That ever will be near,

To guard our steps from sin,
And guide us in the way
To live the life that he has lived,
Which leads to endless day.

His soul, while here on earth,
Fit for the spirit-land,
Held sweet communion with the blest,
A bright, angelic band.

All dressed in robes of white,
Crowned with immortal flowers,
They lifted from his eyes the veil
That hides their world from ours.

They spoke to him of heaven,
Their blissful home above,
And bade him come and dwell with them,
In joy, and peace, and love.

And calmly as the babe
Sleeps on its mother's breast,
Gently as wafts the summer breeze,
Our loved one sank to rest.

Now, freed from every pain,
New life to him is given;
He dwells with Jesus, whom he loved, —
A blessed heir of heaven.

There shall we meet again,
When life's short race is o'er,
Our cherub boy, and be with him
Forever — evermore. HALEY.

TRIBUTE OF THE YOUNGEST SISTER.

Yes, Jimmy 's left this world of pain,
For that bright, heavenly sphere;
Yet his sweet presence oft we feel
Hovering around and near.

His noble mind soared far above
The transient things of earth;
He loved to talk of angels bright,
And Him who gave him birth.

For hours he 'd sit and love to hear
His mother read to him
From that great Book of truth and love
Which gave him peace within.

We loved the darling boy while here
With us upon this earth;
We love him still, the precious one,
In his bright heavenly birth.

We all shall meet him in due time,
And, as the Saviour taught,
A happy family in heaven, —
How sweet the precious thought! SARAH.

I will add that all the members of our somewhat numerous household have received the same blessed influence from the spirit of that sainted boy. They do not feel that their circle is broken, but that one link of the chain is raised to heaven, elevating, in a degree, the whole unbroken circle. This same sweet spiritual influence, without a word or a letter to convey it, extended at the same time three hundred miles, to an absent brother in Philadelphia. Our third son left home for Philadelphia the week before James Arthur's exit. The letter which his father wrote him on the morning of the decease failed to reach him, on account of misdirection; and on the 16th of March, three weeks after this event, he wrote a letter in which was this remark: "I should feel anxious about Jimmy, were it not that I am sure, from

certain causes, that he is better." On the same day, after mailing this letter, he found in the post-office one from his sister, informing him of his little brother's death, when he immediately wrote another letter, in which he says: "I say Jimmy has told me he is happy. I wrote in my other letter that I was not anxious about him, for *certain causes;* but I was almost ashamed to give those causes. It was but a misinterpretation of my dreams, or rather my *conversation with him*, that caused me to attribute his comfort to this world. I had framed in my mind the following to write in that letter, but thought I would not: 'I know Jimmy is happy, and free from pain, whether in this world or in any other; for he has told me he is happy.'" He then proceeds to give a minute description of his dream, or vision, in which he enjoyed the sweetest embraces and the most heavenly converse of little James, when he said "he felt well and happy, and should not suffer any more." This son, who is twenty-

three years of age, has but little of the marvellous in his mental constitution; but there was in his vision such a "realness," as he expresses it, — something so unlike all he had ever experienced, about its manner and subsequent influence upon his mind, — that it rested in his mind as perfect and reliable information. "Jimmy has told me he is happy." Blessed spirit! he is a lovely messenger of "*peace and joy.*"

And the same hallowed influence was breathed into the soul of that distant member of the family, as was present with those who received the last blessing from the mortal lips of the dying boy, and chanted the sweet song of love and hope at the mouth of his sepulchre. This is most happily evinced in the following additional extract from his second letter:

"I weep alone, and my tears are not unmanly. You have had time for resignation, but to me little Jimmy's death now comes all fresh with its saddening influences. Amid strangers, with no one bereaved to

reciprocate my feelings, — with no sympathizing heart to weep in unison with mine, — it brings more of grief than I should have felt, had I been with you when his spirit left for brighter spheres, and with you seen his sweet face once more before it was laid away forever, leaving no truer memory of its features behind than are engraved upon the hearts of those who so much loved him. When I think of my last parting with him here, — of the last sweet kiss, — of how the tears rolled down his thin, pale cheeks, as he thought of my leaving, — the tears my stubborn eyes would not then shed, but that swelled stronger in the breast, now burst forth unrestrained. I would not wish him back here, for he has told me he is happy. Though reason, full of kindness, prompted by the soul, looks up calm and mild to heaven, and with a smile bids him wait a while, fond memory must weep before she can forget him here. How every little gift from him now becomes a dear memorial! A little odor-vial hung on

the 'Christmas Tree,' — how it will be prized! A little blank book he gave to me shall be filled with inscriptions to his memory."

Then, in an address to his brothers and sisters, he closes with these original lines:

Guard well your actions now, and let them prove
Such as would blend with spirits of pure love.
Think, when the world around you throws its snares,
A guardian spirit every presence shares.
Pause, when temptation draws the mind away,
And a foul appetite usurps the sway; —
O, pause, when reason is o'erpowered by will;
For, mark! that spirit hovers o'er us still.
The chain that bound our hearts together here
Has not been severed; but a brother dear, —
A darling child, — a stronger hold has given;
For now its surest stay is fixed in heaven.

EBEN.

TO THE MEMORY

OF

JAMES ARTHUR COBB.

Human blossoms fall diurnal
From Life's broad outspreading tree,
But to bloom in bowers eternal,
In yon high eternity.
Ever the pale Genius' pinion
Sweeps above our fading home,
And to transient, brief dominion
Sorrow, pain and death, may come.

In the silent tomb are sleeping
Age and lovely youth so fair;
But their spirits, in God's keeping,
Range the boundless fields of air.
All that pass the golden portals
Now are learning heavenly lore,
And with pure and blest immortals
Tread salvation's gleaming floor.

Little James has done his mission!
Pain no more can mar his rest;
Lo! he sings in Love's Elysium,
In bright angel-plumage drest.
On his cherub brow is gleaming
The celestial "wreath" of Love;
From his harp of flame is streaming
Music only heard above.

Mourning kindred, cease to sorrow;
Lo! your "darling" is with God!
And on the eternal morrow
All shall meet in His abode.
O! the glories of that Eden
Where our heavenly Father reigns,
And life's golden tree is shading
Courts of bliss — Elysian plains!

There, no radiant link shall sever
In affection's diamond chain,
But the countless jewels ever
In Love's diadem remain;
There, no sigh or pain of sadness
Swells on the ambrosial air,
But the songs of praise and gladness
Breathe the diapason there.

Farewell, little James! so lowly
In thy pleasant bed now sleep;
May thy faith, our faith most holy,
Bid thy mother cease to weep.
Now, thy spirit in Elysium
Blooms amid that angel-band
Seen by thy unfolding vision
Ere departing from our land.
May thy memory, pure and holy,
Lead the childish band to God,
To adore the Saviour lowly,
Who the fields of earth has trod!

German, N. Y. LAURA EGGLESTON.

CHAPTER X.

ESSAY ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

BY SYLVANUS COBB.

In providing for and conducting the education of children, we should study their natures and wants. The agriculturist must know what treatment is adapted to the nature of the plants he would cultivate, in order to bring them, each in its kind, to the highest state of perfection. The shepherd must know the constitutional wants of his flock, that he may be able to care for them in a manner to promote their greatest health and productiveness. So must the educator of the human mind acquaint himself with the constitutional wants of the mind.

All agree in regarding man as an intellectual being, and a suitable subject, of course, of intellectual training. But it is just as certain that man has a religious nature as that he has an intellectual nature; and, of course, that he is a proper subject of religious training. When Professor Combe was lecturing in this country on

the science of phrenology, he said that some were fearful that this science would overthrow religion. "But," he rejoined, "it establishes religion, even on a scientific basis. It finds in man a religious nature. It finds organs provided in the constitution of man for the especial use of the mind, in its action on the subject of religion, or of its relation to God and the spirit-world." It is so; and what this sublime science discovers in the natural organization of the human mind, universal experience and history attest. Man is universally found, in fact, to possess a religious nature.

And in this capacity, — in his religious nature, — man requires as much, and, if possible, more than in all things else, to be truly educated. His religious wants and aspirations are earliest developed, next to the physical, even before the scientific. His earliest wants, when he has become capable of observation and reflection, are the wants of religious knowledge, — of just such knowledge as the gospel of Jesus divulges. He feels his weakness and dependence; he finds himself surrounded and impelled by a power he cannot control or resist; he sees that our race are subject to disappointments, sickness, suffering, and

death; he is surrounded by dangers, and knows not what a day or an hour may bring forth. By what power, what disposition, and for what purpose, am I brought into being, and to be disposed of? — these are among the earliest and most earnest inquiries of the young mind. No mind can away with these inquiries.

Under these circumstances, we cannot enjoy rest and satisfaction of mind, — we cannot enter into that exalted sphere of pure and rational enjoyment which the mind is capable of and aspires to, — without an acquaintance with the Deity; with the almighty Creator and Governor, who controls the affairs of the universe, affecting us, in wisdom and love. It is not enough to know God as a being of almighty power, because power alone does not constitute any being an object of trust. One may possess great power, and a disposition which will employ it to our hurt. Such power would not be an object of trust. For our rest and satisfaction, we need the assurance that the God of almighty power is, and will forever be, our friend.

And this assurance a truly gospel religious education richly gives us. This,

and nothing else, is adapted to the wants of the mind. It teaches us of God's universal providence; that not a sparrow falls without his notice, — that the very hairs of our heads are all numbered of him, — that in Him, whose nature is love, we live, and move, and have our being, — and our eternal destiny is at his gracious disposal. Nothing can fill the place of this knowledge, as a fit and proper substitute. Without it, — speak lightly of these things as you may in your giddy moments, and boast of your having outgrown all concern with religious matters, — yet without this Christian knowledge and faith, the mind is an aching void, an empty bubble amidst tumbling, dashing billows. But by this knowledge of God there is a dignity and glory added to the human mind. It is raised up to live in a higher and wider sphere. And amidst the jars, and dissolutions, and decays, of mortal nature, this mind, enlightened, lives and rests upon the arm of almighty Goodness.

I have said that man, in early childhood, perceives that we are mortal, and must die; and we need the hope of renewed and continued being, and that in a higher and better state, free from the evils that annoy us

here. And this hope, too, the gospel richly gives us. It gives us to feel to be children of God, and heirs, through Christ, of immortal good.

But we stand not alone. Our fathers — where are they? Gone; and some of our brothers, sisters and children, are gone, to meet us no more in the body. But we cannot forget them. The fond remembrances of love cling to them. And there are those around us bound to our hearts by ten thousand tender strings entwined around, whose happiness is as dear to us as our own. Parent, can you mingle with your loved domestic group, in a religious belief which leads you to doubt or despair for any of those loved ones, and say, "With this my soul is satisfied. I now know that I have the primitive faith of the gospel, because my belief yields me the experience which the apostles spoke of, 'joy unspeakable and full of glory'"? Can your affectionate child be educated in a religion which gives him not to trust his heavenly Father's love for his own dear mother, and that child's soul be fed and satisfied? Would he feel that his soul was "nourished up," as St. Paul expresses the effect of right religious education, "in the words of faith

and good doctrine"? No — never. Parents need, and children need, a hope corresponding with their love. And Christianity enjoins us to *love our neighbor as ourselves*. With this love we need the faith of the gospel of Him "in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell."* We need the unadulterated gospel, in the light of which we can see that "God is love,"† that "the Lord is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works;"‡ that "he will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces."§

This faith is as legitimately needful to the wants of the mind, as is bread to the wants of the body. Hence the gospel is denominated "the bread of life." But there are other departments of labor in the conducting of religious education. The *laws* of God, in relation to our duties to him, to ourselves, and to one another, are also important subjects of human study and instruction. But, to undertake this moral education without the religious, — to instruct our children in the duties which the laws of God require, without instructing them in relation to the *character* of him

*Col. 1: 19. †1 John 4: 8. ‡Ps. 145: 9. §Is. 25: 8.

who gives these laws, — is undertaking to build without a foundation. The child is in no fit state to study with interest and love the laws of God, till he has learned the disposition of God towards him, and for what purpose he has given him laws, and made him a subject of his government; — not until he has learned, in short, for what purpose God has given him a being. Knowledge on these subjects, as we have seen, is felt to be needed first of all. It is among the earliest aspirations of the infant mind. To these points, then, I repeat, must the earliest teachings of the inquiring mind be directed.

Then, when the child has learned to find a father and friend in God, — that he has given him an existence in love, with the wise and infallible purpose to make his existence an infinite good, — he is in a fit state of mind to study and respect his laws. With a calm and peaceful trust in God as his loving Father, and a cheerful hope in him for immortal good, he is prepared to attend to his laws as the laws of a friend, adapted to his highest practical good. He cannot then regard God's laws as mere snares by which to involve his children in

trouble, or as arbitrary requirements from which he would wish to be exonerated; but he regards them as the wisely constituted rules of physical and moral health and happiness.

In the light of such education, the well-instructed child inherits the warmest moral sympathy with the sweet utterances of Israel's royal poet: "His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night."* "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward."† How sweet to the child is the study and practice of duty, in this light, the light of faith in God's love, compared with what it is in darkness and distrust, without the

*Ps. 1: 2. †Ps. 19: 7—11.

knowledge of a friend, in earth or heaven, in whom to repose a peaceful confidence! Here is the moral element of Jesus' mind: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me."*

In the conducting of a proper religious education, — which involves the moral likewise, — a due attention is, of course, to be paid to the evils of sin, by the condemnatory operation of the retributive judgment of God. "Verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth."† "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished."‡ "Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for thou renderest unto every man according to his work."§

But it will be perceived, hence, that this department of moral teaching, upon the Christian system, has no tendency to countervail the other and primary department of Christian education. This Scripture doctrine of moral accountability and retributive judgment exerts no weakening influence upon the child's confidence and hope in God, because it is in mercy that he chastises. The punishments administered by his government on transgressors are not

*John 4: 34. †Ps. 58: 11. ‡Prov. 11: 21; 16: 5. §Ps. 62: 12.

the cruel inflictions of merciless revenge, but the wise chastisements of a benevolent Father, designed for the correction of his children. Hence the apostle says, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."* And he argues that it is even more certain that God will punish the disobedient for their good, than it is that earthly parents will punish their children on so wise and benevolent a principle. "Furthermore," he says, "we have had fathers of our flesh which chastened us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they, verily, for a few days, chastened us after their pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."†

Here, then, in the Christian revelation, we have a perfect system of faith and practice. It employs the fear of evil as an aid to our resistance of temptation, which lures by the promise of good in sin. Yet it does not *take from* our confidence in God as our Father, which must ever be our highest and most abiding principle of obedience in love. There are principles here which are adapted to all the religious and moral wants of the

*Heb. 12: 6. †Heb. 12: 9, 10.

inquiring mind; and there is a beautiful harmony of parts, a mingling and blending of moral tone, which commands the approbation and love of the unsophisticated, philosophizing child. To educate our children in these principles, is to nourish their souls with the indispensable bread of life.

But there are parents who would not have their children receive a *religious* education. They would have their children run, without having imparted to them any religious instruction, until they become old enough to collect and form their own opinions.

But where will those parents keep their children, all this while? Shut up, and excluded from all intercourse with mankind? No; they will mingle with the crowd, of all opinions and characters. And do you presume that the minds of your children will remain a void, unoccupied by any thoughts on the subject of religious doctrine, if you neglect to teach them? The soil of their hearts will become overgrown with something, and you are culpable if you neglect to sow the good seed.

But you plead, in excuse, that you are liable to be in error, and you do not wish to entail your errors upon your children.

Do you think, then, that the opinions which you have embraced are more likely to be false than any other set of opinions in the world? Why, then, hold to such opinions? Sentiments which you regard as unfit for your children are unworthy of your own belief. Why not seek until you find a religion which is supported by evidence satisfactory to yourselves, and whose principles are the salvation of your own souls? "O," you reply, "we have sought and found such a religion. The principles of faith and practice which we hold we have examined well, and our experience attests to their goodness, and we sincerely believe them to be true."

Then, because you may possibly be in error in some unessential particulars, will you prefer that your children should be educated in any other set of religious opinions than in your own? Will you choose rather that the minds of your children should be occupied by any wild seed that may be thrown in by the busy partisans of earth, or even by unprincipled latitudinarians, than sow and cultivate there what you sincerely believe to be the good word of truth? There is no justification for such a procedure.

What though you are conscious you may not, in all things, be free from error? You are not required to teach your children to regard you as infallible. When you present them with what you regard as religious truth, present them with the evidence on which you rest its support, and thus inculcate and exemplify the principle of free inquiry. Then, while you furnish them with your well-proved principles of faith and practice, you will also train them in that principle and habit of investigation by which they may correct even your mistakes, *growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.*

But there is not only neglect, there is *cruelty*, in the system of parental policy to which we are objecting. While you would have your children's minds a waste, a void, unoccupied by any sentiments of religious faith, they seriously and painfully need the principles of gospel truth. This we have shown before, in exhibiting the constitutional wants of the human mind. When they witness the sickness and death of friends, and know that they too must die, they painfully need, and are capable of receiving, too, the balmy comforts and consolations of the gospel, — of that gospel

which teaches them to trust in God as the Father and Friend of all, and to hope in Christ for the end of death and all unhappiness, in the ultimate triumphant victory of grace and truth.

The interesting case of our sainted JAMES ARTHUR, which is exhibited in the foregoing *memoirs* by his mother, illustrates the importance of the subject before us. All the gold of California, heaped up around him, and called his own, would have been of no value to him, compared with that of his religious education; — I mean the faith, and hope, and love, with which an evangelical education had furnished his inquiring mind. There is nothing which all the kings of the earth could give me, that I would have proposed to that loved boy, for his life, and his dying hour, in exchange for the riches of that education. I need not enlarge upon this point, for the reader of the *memoirs* has seen and felt it all. O, then, parents and children, neglect not the greater good,—

> "But come, and with his people taste
> The blessings of his love,
> While hope attends the sweet repast
> Of nobler joys above."

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